

A N  
A C C O U N T  
OF THE  
C A R E  
TAKEN IN MOST  
CIVILIZED NATIONS  
FOR THE  
RELIEF of the POOR,  
MORE PARTICULARLY  
In Times of SCARCITY and DISTRESS.

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*Æque Pauperibus prodest, Locupletibus æque.*

HORAT. I. Ep. i. 25.

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By the Rev. Mr. RICHARD ONELY, *K*  
Late of CHRIST-COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
RELIEF  
TAKEN IN MOST  
CIVILIZED NATIONS



IN TIMES OF SCARCITY AND DISTRESS.

HENRY C. F. B. S.

By the Rev. Mr. RICHARD O'NEIL,  
Late of Christ-Corner, Cambridge.

LONDON:  
Printed for the Author, and sold by George Hawkins,  
the Middle-Temple-Gate, and J. Whiston and  
J. G. Smith, in Pall-mall, near the Theatre.  
[Price One Shilling.]

TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
ARTHUR ONSLOW, Esq.

Speaker of the House of Commons.

The following SUBJECT, in which the meanest of the People are chiefly concerned, is not below the Notice of the highest Commoner in England, and therefore humbly submitted to his Consideration,

*By his most dutiful,*

*And very obedient Servant,*

RICHARD ONELY.



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T.O.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

ARTHUR ONSLOW, Esq.

Speaker of the House of Commons.

The following SUBJECT, in which the interests  
of the People are chiefly concerned, is now before  
the Notice of the House of Commons in England  
and therefore humbly submitted to the Consideration

of the House of Commons.

RICHARD ONSLOW



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P R E F A C E.

**T**HE present high Price of CORN, and the Complaints and Disturbances arising therefrom amongst the poorer Sort of People, gave Occasion to the following ACCOUNT; the Design of which is to shew in a short, but general View, the Methods, that have been used by the Lawgivers and Magistrates of old to prevent Dearth and Oppressions; and the Manner of relieving the Subject, when such Calamities have unavoidably happened. Accordingly herein, the Provision of *Corn* and *Bread*, the Regard had to the *Price* and *Goodness* thereof, the Regulation of *Weights* and *Measures*, with several other interesting Matters relative to the Subject in hand, are just occasionally mentioned. Facts only are recited: The Reflections and Uses to be made therefrom, are left to the superior Discernment of the learned and judicious Reader. And the End of the following Pages will be fully answered, if in them any Hint or Example should occur, that may excite more extensive Sentiments of Benevolence and Humanity; or tend to produce any Sort of Method for the speedier Relief of the *Poor*, from the Hand of the *Extortioner* and *Oppressor*.

## E R R A T A.

Page 4, Note a, Line 4, *for* and this is spoken in Deut. *read*, and this is spoken of in Deut.

P. 5, n. b, l. 6, *for* Lifchbil, *read* Bifchbil.

P. 5, n. c, l. 8, *for* Bartinora, *read* Bartenora.

P. 6, n. d, l. 6, *for* an Inch, containeth, *r.* an Inch. Which Inch containeth.

P. 10, l. ult. *for* Deity, *read* Duty.

P. 13, n. l, l. 3, *for* ob obviis, *read* ab obviis.

P. 14, n. m, l. 10, *after* illam, *dele* the Comma.

Ibid. l. 14, *for* admitterenter, *&c.* *r.* admitterentur: hujusmodi sunt mulieres infames.

P. 15, n. n, l. 9, *after* As, *dele* the Comma.

P. 16, n. q, l. 1, *for* ducentis, *r.* ducenties.

P. 19, l. 11, *after* this, *insert* a Comma.

P. 19, n. x, l. 2, *for* accumalo, *r.* accumulo.

P. 22, l. 17, *for* these Statutes, *r.* the Statutes.

P. 23, l. 11, *for* Rifches, *r.* Ryches.

P. 24, l. 24, *after* Assistance *add* a Comma, *and none* *after* Poor.

P. 26, l. 19, *for* Charity Lands, *r.* Chantry Lands.

P. 30, l. 39, *for* suffered, this Year begins, *r.* suffered this Year, begins—  
*with* the Comma *after* Year, *and not* *after* suffered.

Page 13, Line 21, *at* Author of them, *insert* the following Note.

In the Philosophical Transactions, No. 442, there is an Account of the Standard Measures preserved in the Capitol at Rome, by Martin Folkes, Esq; President of the Royal Society.

Pag. 20, Line ult. *at* the Word Miller, *insert*,

The Use of MILLS and MILL-STONES, according to *Pausanias*, was first invented by *Myla*, Son of *Meleges*, first King of *Sparta*: Though *Pliny* attributes the Invention of every thing belonging to Bread and Baking, to *CERES*. *Polydore Vergil* was not able to discover the Author of so useful a Machine. It is doubted whether or no *Water-Mills* were known to the *Romans*, there being no Mention made in the *Digest* but of *Mills* turned by Slaves and Asses.—*Salmasius*, however, and *Gothofred*, will not allow *WATER-MILLS* to have been unknown to the antient *Romans*, though they were not in ordinary Use. *WIND-MILLS* are of much more modern Invention: The first Model of these was brought from *Asia* into *Europe*, in the Time of the Holy Wars.

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**I**N every wise and well established Commonwealth, from the earliest Ages of the World down to the present Times, the Consideration of that most important Article, *BREAD, the Staff of Life, and the Strengtheners of Man's Heart*, has been duly attended to by the Legislature. The Regulation likewise of *Weights and Measures* at all Times, but more especially in a Season of Dearth and Scarceness, has been thought a Matter of the utmost Consequence and Concern. By such a prudent and impartial Administration of Justice, the Rapacity and fraudulent Designs of the Wicked and Covetous are restrain'd and defeated; and the Wants and Hunger of the Poor are supplied in the pinching Years of Dearth and Necessity, and a due Care and Provision of this Kind comes recommended to the Governors and Magistrates of a Nation not only from the religious Dictates of Charity and Humanity, but even

Ezek. iv. 16.  
Psal. civ. 15.

B from



from the truest Principles of Policy and Government. For as the inferior Sort, especially the Manufacturer, the Mechanic, and Labourer, constitute the greatest Part of a Community, and by their Diligence and Industry in their Business, contribute most to the Strength and Opulency thereof, whatever Nation takes the best Methods to support *them*, uses the best Means to support *itself*.

Account from  
the book of  
Job, the ol-  
dest that can  
be had.

The *Book* of *JOB* is supposed to be penned before the Mosaick Institution, and to be one of the oldest Books in the World, for Reasons, I think, unanswerable. The Calamities of *Job* are therein described to be so great, that his Friends thought that he must have been guilty of the most heinous Crimes; which had involved him in such a complicated Scene of Unhappiness and Misery.

Job xxii. 5, 7.

“Is not thy Wickedness great (says *Eliphaz*) and thine Iniquities infinite? for thou hast taken a Pledge from thy Brother for nought, and stripped the Naked of their Clothing. Thou hast not given Water to the Weary to drink; and thou hast withholden *Bread* from the Hungry.

But *Job*, conscious of having done his Duty, as a Magistrate, and a Man influenced by religious Considerations, clears himself of these unjust Accusations, by a voluntary Sort of Oath of Purgation.

Job xxxi. 16,  
17, &c.

“If I have withheld the *Poor* (says he) from their De-  
“fire, or caused the Eyes of the Widow to fail: Or have  
“eaten my Morsel myself alone, and the Fatherless hath  
“not eaten thereof: If I have seen any perish for want of  
“Clothing, or any Poor without Covering: If his Loins  
“have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with  
“the Fleece of my Sheep: If I have lift up my Hand a-  
“gainst the Fatherless, when I saw my Help in the Gate;  
“then let mine Arm fall from the Shoulder-blade, and  
“mine Arm be broken from the Bone. For Destruction  
“from God was a Terror to me, and by Reason of his  
“Highness I could not endure.”\*

*Job* speaks this concerning himself, as a Man in a *private* Station; in a *publick* Capacity, as a Magistrate of the Land, he maintains the Integrity of his past Character in that

that beautiful and affectionate Apology, which he makes for himself as follows.

“ When I went out to the Gate through the City, when  
 “ I prepared my seat in the Street: The young Men saw Job xxix.  
 “ me, and hid themselves, and the Aged arose and stood  
 “ up. The Princes refrained talking, and laid their Hand  
 “ on their Mouth. The Nobles held their Peace, and  
 “ their Tongue cleaved to the Roof of their Mouth. When  
 “ the Ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the  
 “ Eye saw me, it gave witness to me: Because I delivered  
 “ the Poor that cried, and the Fatherless, and him that  
 “ had none to help him. The Blessing of him that was  
 “ ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the Widow’s  
 “ Heart to sing for Joy. I put on Righteousness, and it  
 “ cloathed me; my Judgment was as a Robe and a Dia-  
 “ dem: I was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet was I to the  
 “ Lame. I was a Father to the Poor: and the Cause which  
 “ I knew not, I searched out.

That this *Eastern Magistrate* had been very serviceable to his Country likewise in Time of Dearth and Necessity, appears from his exclaiming against the Ingratitude of those, whom he had then served. “ For Want and Famine they  
 “ were solitary; fleeing into the Wilderness in former Time Job xxviii. 15,  
 “ desolate and waste; who cut up Mallows by the Bushes, 25, &c. xxxi.  
 “ and Juniper Roots for their Meat; and now they abhor 6.  
 “ me, and flee from me, &c.

I believe that there is no Mention made in the Book of *Job* of any particular Weight or Measure; but as *Weights* and *Measures* are Words, which he uses upon many Occasions, ’tis evident, that they were in use in his Time, and from the Description of *Job*’s Character we may well presume, that *He*, as far as was in his Power, always kept them just and true.

In a Word, Justice, Charity, and Humanity, were the most shining Properties of the Character of *Job*; who, as he had heretofore relieved others in Adversity, now comforts himself with this Reflection — “ Did not I weep for Job xxx. 3,  
 “ him that was in Trouble? Was not my Soul grieved 4, & 10.  
 “ for the Poor?

Account from the Jewish Theocracy. In the JEWISH COMMONWEALTH the greatest Care was taken, and the most positive Commands given, enforced by the Sanction of Rewards and Punishments, with Regard to the afore-mentioned Particulars. And this Commonwealth, says a learned and intelligent Writer, is without

Lowman on the Jewish Polity, p. 1. Question one of the most ancient in the World, and justly looked upon as a Model of Government of divine Original; it will deserve our Attention, as much, sure, as any of the Forms of Government in the ancient Times, either among the *Egyptians*, *Greeks*, or *Romans*. It should more especially deserve our Attention as *Christians*, who own the Laws delivered by *Moses* to the Hebrew Nation, to have been delivered by the Oracle of GOD, and established by Authority of the supreme Governor of the World; in which therefore we may expect to find a wise and excellent Model, becoming the Wisdom of such a Lawgiver.

One Sort of a third Year's Tithe [a] of the Fruits and Product of the Land was allotted and set apart for the Needy and Helpless, which is specified in Deuteronomy.

[a] After a Man hath reaped the Seed of the Earth, or gathered the Fruits of the Trees, and ended the Work thereof, he separateth out of it one of fifty; and this is called the great Heave-Offering (or First Fruits) and it is given to the Priest; and this is spoken in Deut. xviii. 4. Afterward he separateth out of the Remainder one of ten; and that is called the first Tithe, and he giveth it to the Levites; and this is mentioned in Numb. xviii. 24. After this he separateth out of the Residue, one of ten, and that is called the second Tithe; and it is for the Owners, and they eat it in Jerusalem; and this is spoken of in Levit. xxvii. 30, 31, and Deut. xiv. 22. According to this Order do they separate in the first Year of the seven, and in the second, and in the fourth, and in the fifth.

But in the third, and in the sixth of the seven, after they have separated the first Tithe, he separateth, out of the Remainder, another Tithe, and giveth it to the Poor, and that is called the Tithe of the Poor: And these two Years there is no second Tithe, but the Tithe of the Poor, and that is spoken of in Deut. xiv. 28, and xxvi. 12. The Year of Release (which is the seventh Year) is all free; and there is in it no Heave-Offering nor Tithes at all, either first, or second, or Tithe of the Poor. *Ainsworth in loc.*

All Frauds and Abuses herein were cognizable by the Sanhedrim.

“ At



“ At the End of three Years thou shalt bring forth all  
 “ the Tithe of thine Increase of the same Year, and shalt  
 “ lay it up within thy Gates. And the Levite, (because  
 “ he hath no Part or Inheritance with thee) and the Stranger  
 “ and the Fatherless, and the Widow (which are within thy  
 “ Gates) shall come and shall eat, and be satisfied ; that the  
 “ Lord thy God may bless thee in all the Work of thine  
 “ Hand which thou doest.”

Dent. xiv. 28,  
 29.

This extraordinary [b] Provision appointed for the *Poor*,  
 is likewise mentioned, and alluded to, in several other Pas-  
 sages of Scripture.

Dent. xxvi. 12.  
 Neh. xiii. 10.  
 Mal. iii. 8.

And besides this, there were three or four Things in  
 their yearly Harvest allotted to the Poor, viz. a *Nook*, or  
*Corner of the Field*, the *forgotten Sheaf*, the *Gleanings*, and  
*single or fallen Grapes*, and *ungathered Olives*. “ And when  
 “ ye reap the Harvest of your Land, thou shalt not whol-  
 “ ly reap the Corners of thy Field, neither shalt thou ga-  
 “ ther the [c] Gleanings of thy Harvest ; and thou shalt  
 “ not glean thy Vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every  
 “ Grape of thy Vineyard ; thou shalt leave them for the  
 “ Poor, and Stranger. I am the Lord your God.”

Lev. xix. 9, 10.

[b] At this Day the Jews, though they are not in their own Country,  
 neither have any Levitical Priesthood, yet those who will be reputed re-  
 ligious among them, do distribute in lieu of Tithes, the tenth of their  
 Increase unto the Poor, being persuaded that God doth bless their Estates  
 the more. For their usual Proverb is,

*Thregnafter, lischbil sche thegnafter,*

That is,

*Pay Tithes, that thou mayst be rich.*

*Godwyn's Heb. Ant. p. 226.*

[c] That the Gleanings of their Corn, Olive, and Wine-Harvest were  
 no inconsiderable Benefits to the Poor appears from that Passage of  
 Scripture, Jud. viii. 2. “ Is not the Gleaning of the Grapes of Ephraim  
 “ better than the Vintage of Abiezer ?”

For a more particular Account of Israel's Tithings, and Provisions for  
 the Poor, and other Matters, see *Ainsworth*, *Maimonides*, and *Godwyn*.

These Matters are all further explained likewise in the Talmud, also  
 in the Book of *Benedictions*, in the Commentaries of *Bartinora*, *Scaliger*,  
*Amama*, *Sigonius*, &c.

Nay,

Nay, the Jewish Law carries this Point still farther.  
 Deut. xxv. 4. "Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the  
 "Corn."

And I cannot but observe, that this Text is a severe Re-  
 proof to such of our most holy Religion, who, tho' they  
 call themselves *Christians*, are so hard-hearted, as to refuse  
 to their Brethren that *Charity*, which the *Jews* are by *this*  
*Law* obliged to shew to *their Beasts*.

*St. Paul*, the best Commentator upon this Text, says ;  
 1 Tim. v. 18. "The Labourer is worthy of his Reward."

That the *Poor* might not be wronged in [*d*] Weight or  
 Measure, the following Commands are strictly enjoined.

Lev. xix. 36, "Ye shall do no Unrighteousness in Judgment, in Mete-  
 37. "Yard, in Weight, or in Measure: Just Balances, just

"Weights, a just Ephah, and a just Hin shall ye have."

Deut. xxv. 13, "Thou shalt not have in thy Bag divers Weights, a great  
 14, 15, 16. "and a small. Thou shalt not have in thine House di-

"vers Measures, a great and a small. But thou shalt have

"a perfect and just Weight, a perfect and just Measure

"shalt thou have; that thy Days may be lengthened in

"the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For

"all that do such Things, and all that do unrighteously,

"are an Abomination unto the Lord thy God."

In the Times of the Kings of *Israel*, it was the Custom  
 to lay up Bread-Corn, and other Necessaries, for the Suf-

[*d*] Measures in use among the Hebrews, and so among all other Na-  
 tions, are of two Sorts; Measures of Application, a Span, a Cubit, a  
 Yard, and the like. In which, that there might be no Deceit, the Ground  
 of these Measures was the Breadth of so many Barley-Corns, middle-  
 sized, laid by one another. Hence, for Instance, the Digitus, a Finger,  
 an Inch, containeth the Breadth of six Barley-Corns, joined together  
 where they are thickest.

Their Measures of Capacity were of two Sorts, some for dry Things,  
 as Corn, Seed, &c. some for liquid Things, as Wine, Oil, &c. In both,  
 that there might be a just Proportion observed, all their Measures were  
 defined by a set Number of Hen-Egg Shells, of a middle Size. Hence,  
 for Instance, their Kab, containing 24 Eggs, held Proportion with our  
 Quart.

Their Weights and Coins likewise, that they might be just, were  
 weighed by Barley-Corns.

tenance of Man's Life, in [e] Store-houses; and these were built in Fields, Towns, Castles, &c. as Conveniences suited, or the Exigencies of the Times required. *David*, when he made the necessary Disposition of Officers over the several Departments and Revenues of his Kingdom, did not forget to appoint one over the *Store-houses* in the Fields, in the "Cities, and in the Villages, and in the Castles." <sup>1 Chr. xxvii. 25.</sup> Thus whilst he took Care, (to use his own Words) *that his Garners were full, affording all Manner of Store*, by the Blessing of God attending his prudent Precautions, *He abundantly blessed his Subjects with Provisions, and satisfied the Poor with Bread.* <sup>Pf. cxliv. 13. Pf. cxxxii. 15.</sup> And if, upon no other Account, yet for his compassionate Regard for the *Poor* alone, the Royal Prophet had merited the honourable Appellation of the *Man after God's own Heart*, who is Benevolence and Goodness itself, and who in Scripture delighteth to be called the peculiar Friend and Patron of the Needy and Distressed.

*Solomon*, his Son, in whose Writings is contained a most excellent System of *Ethics, Politics, and Oeconomics*, and who as a *righteous Prince*, and wise Magistrate, *considered the Cause of the Poor*, built many *Store-houses* amidst the other magnificent Buildings in his Dominions, whose Example herein was afterwards followed by those two other good Kings, *Jehosaphat* and *Hezekiah*. <sup>2 Chr. viii. 4. 1 Kings ix. 17, 18, 19. 2 Chron. xvii. 12. 2 Chr. xxxii. 27, 28.</sup>

Nor was his Care and Vigilance in rectifying *false Weights and Measures* less remarkable, as appears from that bitter Exclamation against them in *Prov. xi. 1.* "A false Balance is an Abomination to the Lord; but a just Weight is his Delight;" which he again repeats in *Prov. xx. 23.*

[e] As the Jewish Constitution (says Lowman) put a Bar to great Riches, and made such Provision for the natural Conveniences of Life, that very few could be in great Want or Poverty: This served to diminish greatly the Temptations of Luxury, Pride, and Envy; nor were there any so necessitous as to seek Relief for their private Wants and Misery, in the public Confusion and Disorders of their Country. How much do these Provisions of the Hebrew Government, to prevent the Occasions of Faction, excel all the Constitutions of the fam'd Spartan Lawgiver for the same Purpose, so much celebrated by the admired Græcian Authors?

*Lowman on the Jewish Polity, p. 248.*

" Divers



“ Divers Weights are an Abomination unto the Lord ; and  
 “ a false Balance is not good.”

As we have now seen that a proper Provision of Bread for the *Poor*, and a due Regulation of [ *f* ] *Weights* and *Measures* was one chief Support of the *Jewish Polity* ; so we may observe, that a Neglect of these important Articles was one of the woeful Causes of the final Ruin and Destruction of that once flourishing People and Nation. And, to wave a Multiplicity of Proofs, which might be produced both from sacred and prophane History in verifying this Assertion, I shall only quote that very remarkable one in Amos.

Amos viii. 3.  
 &c.

“ Hear this, O ye that swallow up the Needy, even to  
 “ make the *Poor* of the Land to fail ; saying, When will  
 “ the [ *g* ] *New-Moon* be gone, that we may sell Corn ? and  
 “ the *Sabbath*, that we may set forth Wheat ? making the  
 “ [ *b* ] *Ephab* small, and the *Shekel* great, and falsifying the  
 “ Balances by Deceit ? That we may buy the [ *i* ] *Poor* for

[ *f* ] 'Tis highly probable, if not evident, (says Dr. Arbuthnot) that the Jews used the Egyptian Weights and Measures. They had been in that Country in a State of Slavery for about 200 Years, and consequently, in all Appearance, had no Measures of their own. Moses, when he speaks to them of Measures, to be sure talks in a Style that was intelligible. When he speaks, for Example, of an Ephah, he presumes they knew what Measure he meant. That he himself was skilled in Weights and Measures, Arithmetic and Geometry, there is no Reason to doubt : Besides, those of the Egyptians were adjusted by the Authority of their first King Mizraim, who received them from his Predecessors, Ham and Noah, from whom Abraham's Family had them likewise.

*Arbuthnot on Weights and Measures*, p. 70.

[ *g* ] *New-Moon, Sabbath*. The Jews by their Laws were prohibited from selling any Thing on the first Day of the Month, on the Sabbaths, and Holidays.

[ *b* ] *Ephab, Shekel*. These Extortioners bought by the latter, and sold by the former.—We are to understand that, as the *Romans* in the former Ages used *Æs grave*, Bullion-Money, unstamp'd, which in the Mass, or Billet, they weighed out in their Payments, and afterwards *Æs Signatum*, coined Metals : So the *Hebrews*, though at last they used coined Money, yet at first they weighed their Money uncoined ; *Abraham* weighed to *Ephron* the Silver, *Gen.* xxiii. 16. Hence the *Shekel* had its Name from a Hebrew Word, which signifies *ponderare, librare*, to weigh, or put in the Balance.

[ *i* ] *Buy the Poor for Silver*. That is, by Oppression force them to give

“ Sil-

“ Silver, and the [k] *Needy for a Pair of Shoes*; yea, and  
 “ fell the Refuse of the Wheat? The Lord hath sworn  
 “ by the Excellency of Jacob, Surely, I will never forget  
 “ any of their Works. Shall not the Land tremble for this,  
 “ and every one mourn, that dwelleth therein? and it shall  
 “ rise up wholly as a Flood; and it shall be cast out and  
 “ drowned, as by the Flood of Egypt, &c.”

In the Beginning of CHRISTIANITY the *Apostles* inter-  
 meddled not with the Administration of the Governments, in which they preached the Holy Gospel: But they were taught by their great Lord and Master, in that best of Forms for offering up their Addresses to the Most High, to make this Petition:

Account from  
 Church His-  
 tory.

*Give us this Day our daily Bread.*

Matth. v.

St. Paul indeed, in one of his Epistles to the Corinthians, explains the Manner of collecting Alms in the Assemblies of the primitive Christians. This Practice they had borrowed from the Jewish Synagogue, where it still obtains.

In the first Ages of the CHURCH, the *Bishop* had the immediate Charge of all the Poor, both sound and diseased, as also of Widows, Orphans, Strangers, &c. When the Churches had fixed Revenues allotted to them, it was decreed, that at least one fourth Part thereof should go to the Relief of the Poor; and to provide for them the more commodiously, divers Houses of Charity were built, which are since denominated *Hospitals*, at first popularly called *Spittals*.

See Cham-  
 bers's Dict. un-  
 der the Word  
*Hospital*.

They were governed wholly by the Priests and Deacons, under the Inspection of the Bishop.

In Course of Time separate Revenues were assigned for the Hospitals; and particular Persons, from Motives of Piety and Charity, gave Lands and Money for erecting of Hospitals.

up themselves for Servants, when they could not pay. *Vid. Levit. xxv. 39, 40. and 2 Kings iv. 1.*

[k] *The Needy for a Pair of Shoes*. A proverbial Expression.

*Julian the Apostate*, observing the Excellency and public Utility of these charitable Foundations, writes thus to *Ar-facius*, the High-Priest of *Galatia*.

Julian Imp.  
Oper. Par. se-  
cunda.

" 'Tis my Will and Pleasure that you institute several  
" *Hospitals* in every City ; that not only Strangers of our  
" own Religion, but of other Sectaries likewise, dissenting  
" from us, who are in Want and Necessity, may partake of  
" our Bounty and Humanity. I have already ordered you  
" the necessary Supplies for such good Purposes. For I have  
" commanded that 30,000 Modii of Wheat, and 60,000  
" Pints of Wine be distributed throughout all *Galatia*. A  
" fifth Part of which I judge proper should be bestowed to  
" those poor People who attend our *Flamens* ; the rest may  
" be given proportionably to the Stranger and Necessitous.  
" If you take Notice, there is not a Beggar to be seen a-  
" mongst the Jews, and even the wicked *Galileans* maintain  
" not only their own Poor, but many of ours also ; and  
" this will be a shameful Reflection upon us *Gentiles*, if our  
" Poor are suffered to remain in Necessity, destitute of the  
" Assistance and Protection we ought to afford them."

When the Church Discipline began to relax, these Foundations were abus'd, but were rectified by the Council of *Vienne*; and afterwards the Proceedings of this Council relative hereto were confirmed by the Council of *Trent*.

Account from  
the Egyptian  
State.  
Herod. Eu-  
terpe. Xe-  
noph. Anab.  
l. iv.

Upon a slight Search into the *History* of the EGYPTIANS, we shall be informed by *Herodotus* and *Xenophon*, " That  
" *Osiris* was the first amongst them, that found out Food  
" fit and convenient for Man's Body. And that, where  
" Vines would not grow and be fruitful, he taught the In-  
" habitants to make Drink of Barley, little inferior in  
" Strength and pleasant Flavour to Wine itself. For which  
" Benefits he was esteemed by all worthy of divine Honours."  
And *Plutarch* tells us, " that *Osiris*, when he was King of  
" *Egypt*, drew them off from a beggarly and bestial Way  
" of Living, by shewing them the use of Grain, and by  
" making for them Laws, and teaching them to honour  
" the Gods." *Osiris* was represented, says *Plutarch*, by an  
Eye and Sceptre. — A very proper and expressive Emblem  
this of the Deity and Majesty of every King, who ought  
to

Plutar. II. &  
Osir.



to employ both his Forecast and Power for the Safety and Welfare of his People.

And, how greatly the *Ægyptians* improved and cultivated these Discoveries and Advantages, is abundantly confirmed to us by the concurrent Testimony both of sacred and profane Historians: For by a proper Culture of their Land, the Advantage of the River *Nile*, and a due Care of the Grain at Seeds-time, in the Blade, earing, reaping, threshing, and laying up in Store-houses, *Ægypt* soon became the best Mart for Corn, as well as Science, in the known World; and from hence were continually imported, as well Arts and Polity, to civilize Man in the Lands of Barbarism and Ignorance; as also Food to sustain him in the Times of Famine and Distress.

Gen. xlii. 5.

I cannot help here making particular mention of the affecting Story of *Joseph* and his Brethren; the Pathos of which, as expressed in the genuine Language, and native Simplicity of the Scriptures, exceeds all Colouring of Tragic and Poetic Description, and therefore to them I refer the Reader with this apposite Remark thereon by the pious and learned *Bishop Hall*. "The Providence of so faithful an Officer as *Joseph* saved *Ægypt*, and all the bordering Nations, from perishing with Hunger; for, 'tis like, the seven Years of Plenty preceding those of Famine, were not confined to *Ægypt*; other Countries adjoining were no less fruitful, yet in the seven Years of Famine, *Ægypt* had Corn when they wanted."

That the *Ægyptians* had public *Store-houses*, with Overseers or Guardians appointed over them, and wise and exact Dispensers of the Corn lodged in them, is confirmed by holy Writ: And an Historian of great Credibility informs us, what Care and Notice was taken of the inferior Part

Gen. xli. 36, 56, &c.

Diod. lib. i. p. 67, 68.

amongst them. "Husbandmen, Shepherds, and Artificers, says he, formed the three Classes of lower Life in *Ægypt*, but were nevertheless had in very great Esteem, particularly Husbandmen and Shepherds. The Body Politick requires a Superiority and Subordination of its several Members; for as in the natural Body the Eye may be said to hold the first Rank, yet its Lustre does not dart Contempt upon the Feet, the Hands, or even

Vid. St. Paul's Epist. 1 Cor. c. xii.

Vid. Rollin's Hist. vol. 1. p. 52. "those Parts, which are less honourable." In like manner, among the *Ægyptians*, "the Priests, Soldiers, and Scholars, were distinguished by particular Honours; but all Professions, to the meanest, had their Share in the public Esteem, because the despising any Man, whose labours, however mean, were useful to the State, was thought a Crime.

Such was the excellent Constitution of the *Ægyptians*. And, that none but the Deserving and Industrious amongst the lower Rank should meet with the public Encouragement, and that every Man might be made useful to the State, he was obliged to enter his Name and Place of Abode in a public Register, that remained in the Hand of the Magistrate, and to annex his Profession, and in what manner he lived. If such a one gave a false Account of himself, he was immediately put to Death.

Account from the Grecian Polity. If we look into the *Grecian History*, we may find amongst the earliest Accounts of that Nation, that Ceres, a Woman of Sicily, about the Year of the World 1030, (according to Sir *Isaac Newton*) comes into *Attica*, and there teaches the Greeks to sow Corn; for which Benefaction she was deified after Death. She first taught the Art to *Triptolemus*, the young Son of *Celeus*, King of *Eleusis*. Agreeable to this Fact, *Pliny* tells us, that Ceres was the first that shewed the Way of sowing Corn. Whereas beforetime Men lived on Mast. She taught also, how to grind Corn, to knead Dough, and make Bread thereof, in the Land of *Attica*, *Sicily*, and *Italy*; for which Benefit to Mankind she was reputed a Goddess.

Pliny, 1. vii. c. 56.

And, if from this first Rising of the Athenian State we bend our Eyes forward to its Meridian Strength and Grandeur, we shall see, that the Consideration of *Bread-Corn*, and other necessary Provisions for the People, was still duly attended to by the Legislature.

SOLON, we find, was the first, who regulated their *Weights and Measures*.

Vid. Potter's Greek Antiq. vol. 1. p. 53. Amongst the Magistrates there were the *Overseers of Corn*,\* fifteen in Number. Their Business was to take Care, that

\* Σιτοφύλακες.

Corn.

Corn and Meal should not be sold at too dear a Price, and to appoint the Affize of Bread.

There were others, whose Office was to see that the Measures of Corn were just and equal.—There were others likewise appointed to inspect the Markets; and to see, that no Man wronged, nor in any way circumvented another in Buying and Selling.

And such blessed Consequences attended the Care, Vigilance, and Activity of the Magistracy, (as one of their most celebrated Orators tells us) that no Citizen of *Athens*, in those Times, ever died of Hunger, nor ever did a [1] Beggar dishonour their Streets.

Isocrates Orat.  
Areop. p. 369.

The *Roman* COMMONWEALTH in its marvellous Rise, its flourishing Progress, and its exemplary Fall, has often been compared to the *Jewish Theocracy*. And indeed therein we may observe a remarkable Parity of Circumstances with regard to the Provisions of *Bread-Corn*, and the Regulation of *Weights and Measures*. Who was the first Inventor of Weights and Measures, is much disputed amongst the Learned. *Pliny* says, that *Phidon*, the Argive; but *Gellius*, that *Palamedes* was the first Author of them. However that may be, it has been thought a Matter of the greatest Consequence in all political States, to keep them true and regular, as well for the Sake of Commerce, as for the Benefit of Individuals.

Account from  
the R. Com-  
monwealth.

Pliny, l. vii.  
c. 56.

In the *Roman* State, as in the *Jewish*, we find Officers appointed for these important Places of Trust. The Commons, by the Permission of the Senate, chose yearly out of their own Body the *Plebeian Ædiles*, who, amongst other Matters, were to have the Care of the rectifying the Weights and Measures.

Vid. Dionys.  
lib. vi.  
Vid. Kennet's  
Rom. Antiq.  
p. 117.

*Julius Cæsar* created the *Corn Ædiles*, to inspect the public Stores of Corn and other Provisions, to supervise all the Commodities exposed in the Markets, and to punish Delinquents in all Matters concerning Buying and Selling.

Vid. Dio. lib.  
xliii. & Pomp.  
lib. ii. de  
Orig. Juris.

[1] Το δὲ μέγιστον, τότε μὲν οὐδεὶς ἢ τῶν πολιτῶν ἐνδεὴς τῶν ἀναγκαίων, οὐδὲ προσ-  
αίτων τῆς ἐντυγχάνουσας τῷ πολὺν κατῆσχυνε. Et quod maximum est, eo tem-  
pore nemo civis rei familiaris penuria laborabat, neque ob obviis stipe ro-  
ganda urbem probro afficiebat. *Is. Orat. Areop.* p. 369.

And



And besides these ordinary Officers, there was an *extraordinary* one chosen in Time of extraordinary Dearth, called the [*m*] *Corn-Prefect*, and he was for that time invested with larger Authority than those ordinary Clerks of the Market. He was to see, that Bread-Corn was bought up from all Places, and if any had more than would serve their own Uses, he was to order all Hoarders to bring it out, and to sell it at a just and reasonable Price. By the Assistance of this Magistrate, the People of *Rome*, in Time of Dearth and Scarcity, did often receive great Benefit. When *Pompey* the Great was invested with this Power, as he was once, during the Administration of it, going to sail with a great Quantity of Corn from Sicily, the Admirals told him, that it was not safe to venture to Sea in so tempestuous a Season, upon which he is said to have made that spirited and truly Patriot Resolution: “*There is no Necessity for us to live ;*” “*but for the Preservation of the Roman People, there is*” “*an absolute Necessity for us to sail, at all Adventures.*” And so great was the public Indulgence to the Office of this Magistrate, that the Information of Persons otherways infamous, were, in Matters cognizable by him, admitted as sufficient Evidence.

Vid. Kennet's  
Rom. Antiq.  
p. 165.

[*n*] Several salutary Laws were also made by the *Tribunes*, with Regard to the Distribution of Corn from the public

[*m*] Quoniam de potestatibus agitur, ratio etiam admonet, ut de Præfecto Annonæ extra ordinem tunc creari solito, nonnihil adjiciam.---Hujus Magistratus difficili tempore, & caritate Annonæ, usus potissimum atque opera exigebatur. Frumentum undique cœmendum ; & si quis ultra proprios usus possideret, in medium ponendum curabat, advehi undique & adductum justo pretio venire nitebatur. Cujus ope magistratus egregia populo Romano, penuria laboranti, sæpe opera navata est. Eam potestatem, de qua agimus, cum magnus ille Pompeius ageret, atque Sicilia, cum magna vi frumenti, solvere pergeret, ac Gubernatores classis non se committendos maxime sævienti pelago dicerent, illam, saluberrimam reipub. vocem dedisse edicitur : “*Navigare enim, inquit, necesse est ; vivere necesse non*” “*esse.*” Tantus præterea Annonæ hujus causa favor auctoritasque accessit, ut quæ alioquin personæ ad accusationem minus idoneæ essent, hac tamen in causa admitterentur hujusmodi sunt mulieres, infames, & quæ sunt ejus generis, quo nos etiam utimur. L. Fenestella, *De Magistratibus sacerdotiisque Romanorum, Lutetiae*, 1529.

[*n*] Frumentatio vetus Romæ, & ipso etiam senatu. Ille in rebus, &

Gra-

Granaries, whence the most deserving and poor People received it for nothing, or for an under Price, in Times of Dearth and Necessity.

Vid. Godwyn  
Antiq. Rom.  
c. 2, p. 222.  
of Corn Laws.

And, that the People might receive their allotted proportion, and that strict Justice might be done to all, there were four Officers appointed for this Purpose, Men of good Repute, and approved Honesty. Qui tesseras habebat (says Lipsius) ad curatores frumenti ibat, munus institutum ab Augusto: Quatuor-viri enim erant, iique ex honestioribus, & qui ante quinquennium Prætura functi essent.

The Distributions of Corn were made uncertainly, as the Badness of the Times, and the Necessities of the Poor required. Sometimes they were made monthly, annually, or daily, upon very great Extremities; and besides their ordinary Donations, there were frequently extraordinary Presents of Corn given to the People, and the Soldiery, upon particular Days of Festivity, Triumphs, and Ovations.

[o] The Number of People, to whom Portions of Corn were given, was amazing; nor was the Quantity at some particular Seasons less surprising. And no one, however infamous, if a Roman Citizen, was excluded.

Julius Cæsar, at a Triumph, once gave to each Citizen ten Modii of Corn, ten Pounds of Oil, and added 100

Sueton. in Cæsar. c. 38.

annona arcta, quasi benignus Pater, miseritus Plebis, frumentum aliquando divisit, non tamen nullo, sed modico ære.

Manius Martius a *Plebeian Edile* of Rome, was the first who served the People with Wheat, at one *As* the *Modius*, i. e. 3 d.  $\frac{1}{4}$ th, which considering the Difference betwixt our *Peck*, and their *Modius* will make per Quarter, 2s. 1d.  $\frac{4}{9}$ q. Pliny, *lib. xviii. c. 3.*

Minutius Augurinus, the 12th Tribune of the Commons, brought down the Price of Wheat for three Market-Days to an *As*, the *Modius*. Pliny.

Frumentum quoque in annonæ difficultatibus sæpe levissimo, interdum nullo pretio, viritim admensus est. Sueton. in *Vit. Cæsar. August. c. 41.*

[o] Quis tamen numerus accipientium fuit? reperio aliquando ad trecenta viginti millia cepisse. Tot illi Romæ Pauperes? Pauperes, aut saltem qui sublevari gauderent: inter quos liberti, & id genus, maxime fere. Seneca, tenuiores omnes cives. Frumentum, inquit, publicum tam fur, quam perjurus & adulter accipiunt, & sine discrimine morum, quisquis civis est. Lipsius, *de Mag. Rom. lib. ii. c. 10.*

Nummi.

*Nummi* [p] to the 300 he had promised them before. And *Eusebius*, in his Chronicle, writes, that, after the Victory of *Actium*, there were reckoned of Roman Citizens 4,160,000.

But these Accounts are not incredible, when we consider the vast Wealth of the *Romans*; and that these public Funds were chiefly supplied from the many Corn Provinces that were conquered, and made tributary thereto, especially [q] *Egypt*, *Sicily*, and *Africa*.

The pernicious Consequences of *engrossing*, *forestalling*, and *regrating* of Corn, may be supposed to be sufficiently provided against by the incorporated [r] Society of *Merchants*, as that Society was under the Government and Direction of a Magistrate, and all Corn Shops were invested with particular [s] Privileges and Immunities.

Tacit. lib. xii.

[p] We find by the Writers of the Roman Antiquities, that Money was frequently given to the People, as well as Corn and Bread; and we are told, that at Rome there were Officers called the *Triumviri Mensarii*, three Men, Sort of Bankers, who had Authority to pay out of the common Treasury poor Mens Debts. *Alex. Gen. Diet. lib. i. c. 16.*

However *Lipsius* tells us, that the Romans took an excellent Method of paying the Soldiers, sometimes in Victuals, &c. and not in Money, which, if they had always received, they might have applied to wrong and bad Purposes. *Bonum & utile institutum, militi semper victum esse, nec inopia cogi ad rapiendum, aut deferendum. Si pecunia in hunc usum, potuisset ire in alium usum; igitur maluerant rem dare ipsam.*

*J. Lipsius, de Militiâ Rom. Lib. iv. Dialog. 16.*

[q] *Hujus (Augusti) tempore, ex Ægypto urbi annua ducentis centena millia (modios) frumenti inferebantur. Sed quanta ea summa sit ex sola Ægypto? Atqui Africa jam addenda est, quæ duplum ad Ægyptum dedit. Hoc enim ita palam & adfirmate Josephus scripsit, in Oratione Agrippæ regis ad Judæos. "Africam octo mensibus populum Romanum pascere, Ægyptum autem quaternis." Ex hac igitur ratiocinatione frumentum urbi illatum annuum fuerit sexcenties centena millia modiorum. Sint in dies circiter centum sexaginta quatuor millia octoginta tria. Heu! ingentem copiam! & quæ sufficiat, si inspicis, vel vicies centenis hominum millibus alendis.*

*Lipsius de Magnitudine Rom. lib. ii. c. 10.*

[r] *Plutarch* supposes this Society to have been established by *Numa*: *Florus* and *Orosius* say it was instituted by *Servius Tullius*; and *Dr. Arbuthnot* places its Foundation in the Year of Rome 259. *Vide Arbuthnot's Navigation of the Antients.*

[s] The Corn-Merchants were exempted from municipal Offices. They were raised to the Dignity of Knights by *Constantine*, &c. *Vid. Arbuthnot, ibid. p. 279.*

The



The Fraudulencies of the *Bakers* (as we may suppose) were prevented by Trajan's College, which might be made subject to somewhat the same Superintendency, as the Society of Merchants.

Vid. Aurel. Victor.

[t] *Bakers*, according to Pliny, were first known in *Rome* about the Year 580 U. C. Before that Time every Roman Citizen had his Bread baked at home.—It is no hard Matter to imagine, that the Bakers were not long before they found out several little Arts and Tricks to cheat their Customers, and especially the poorer Sort, as they were the least able to obtain Satisfaction, or to redress their Grievances.

That there were Male-Practices concerning the Bread, plainly appears from several satirical Passages thereon in *Persius* and *Juvenal*, who lived in the Times of *Nero* and *Domitian*. To rectify these Abuses, and to prevent the Frauds of Bakers and Extortioners for the future, as well as for the better supplying the City with Bread in general, *Trajan* founded his College of Bakers.

Perf. Sat. v. ver. 74. Juv. Sat. v. ver. 66.

“ Ut Panis ingenti urbem colentium multitudini abunde suppeditaret, nec deficeret unquam, repertum a *Traiano* firmatumque Pistorum collegium. Qua ratione & po-

Aurel. Victor. Vincent. Con- taren.

[t] The learned are in great Doubt about the Time when *Baking* first became a particular Profession, and Bakers were introduced. It is generally agreed, they had their Rise in the East, and passed from Greece to Italy after the War with *Pyrrhus*, about the Year of Rome 583.

To the foreign Bakers brought into Rome were added a Number of freed Men, who were incorporated into a Body, or, as they called it, a College, from which neither they nor their Children were allowed to withdraw. They held their Effects in common, and could not dispose of any Part of them. Each Bake-house had a *Patronus*, who had the Superintendency thereof; and these *Patroni* elected one out of their Number each Year, who had the Superintendency over all the rest, and the Care of the College. Out of the Body of the Bakers were every now and then one admitted among the Senators.—To preserve Honour and Honesty in the College of Bakers, they were expressly prohibited all Alliance with Comedians and Gladiators; each had his Shop, or Bake-house, and they were distributed into fourteen Regions of the City.—They were excused from Guardianship, and other Offices, which might divert them from their Employments.

By our own Statutes, Bakers are declared not to be Handicrafts. No Man for using the Mysteries or Sciences of Baking, Brewing, Surgery, or Writing, shall be interpreted a Handicraft. 22 Hen. VIII. c. 13.

Vid. Chambers's Dict.

D

“ pulo

“pulo R. universo & peregrinis optimus imperator prof-  
 “pexit, quorum plerique pane a propola vitam tolerabant.

And this Care and Humanity of the Emperor seems to be well attested by the many Eulogiums bestowed on him by Pliny relative hereto.

Plin. Panegy.

Ibid passim.

“Instar ego perpetui congiarii reor affluentiam Annonæ.  
 “Emit Fiscus quicquid videtur emere: inde copiæ, inde an-  
 “nona, de qua inter licentem vendentemque conveniat: inde  
 “hic satietas, nec fames usquam.”

The public Stores and Provisions of the City were likewise well attended to by most of the succeeding [*u*] Emperors, quite down to the Times of *Aurelian* and *Constantine*; who considered this Matter (which was nevertheless sometimes much abused) as the chief Support of the Empire.

*Claudius Cæsar*, especially, took the greatest Care of the public Stock of Provisions, securing the Merchants against all Pirates by Sea: And this Care was highly necessary, because, as *Tacitus* tells us, in his Reign the Roman People, in one Lustrum, amounted to 6,844,000. — This was that *Claudius Cæsar*, in whose Days the Prophet *Agabus* foretold a Dearth would happen throughout the World, when the Christians of Antioch sent some Collection to their suffering Brethren in Judea, by the Hands of Barnabas and Saul,

Acts xi. 27,  
 28.

Many of the Emperors we find to have given a [*x*] *Tessera*, or Victualling Ticket, to the Poor, upon producing which to the Officers at the Day of Distribution, they were to receive such a Proportion of Corn or Bread, and when they were enabled to subsist without the public Charity, they might transfer their Ticket to another.

*Vopiscus* recites a remarkable Extract of a Letter, wrote by *Aurelian* to the Prefect of the Corn-Stores at Rome.

[*u*] Tam de populo, perpetui etiam & certi in eum sumptus: & præsertim ad alimenta. Nam jam ante institutum principes tenuerunt, ut plebem egenam aut tenuem perpetuâ frumentatione pascere; atque ea magno labore & sumptu paranda, advehenda, & tum gratis distribuenda. Mira hæc res sit, si quis consideret; & plane inter omnis ævi, omniumque gentium, admiranda.

[*x*] Populi recensum vicatim egit: at ne plebs frumentationum causa frequentius a negotiis avocaretur, ter in annum quaternum mensium tesseras dare destinavit. Suet. in Vit. Cæsar. August. cap. 40.

“ Amongst

“ Amongst the rest of the Services, which by the Favour  
 “ of Heaven I have done to the Roman State, nothing ap-  
 “ pears to me more glorious, than that I have added to all  
 “ the whole City Provisions, an Ounce, *gratis*, above the  
 “ Market Allowance.”

“ Inter cætera (are his Words in the Original) quibus, *Flavius Vopiscus*.  
 “ Diis faventibus, Romanam rem juvimus, nihil mihi est *cus in Rom.*  
 “ magnificentius, quam quod additamento unciæ omne an- *Imperat. Hist.*  
 “ nonarum urbicarum genus juvi.”

He augmented the Bread thus much without encreasing the Price. And this [x] Vopiscus tells us, the Emperor was enabled to do from the Advantages he had gained by his Expedition into *Egypt*, by the Assistance and Auspices of *Probus*, who afterwards succeeded to the Empire.

Thus from an attentive Perusal of the Roman History we may find, that this Corn-Establishment, &c. was first begun by the Senate in, or about the Times of the Kings of Rome; increased and improved in the consular State; that it was interwoven into the very Constitution of the Commonwealth, and both subsisted and expired together.

It might not be improper to subjoin some few Accounts of the popular Insurrections amongst the Romans, in the Times of Dearth and Scarcity, together with the Proceedings of the Senate consequent thereupon; and likewise some Instances of the public Honours bestowed on those who exerted a public Spirit, in such Seasons of Calamity and Distress.

We learn from the Writers of their History, that there were several formidable [y] Insurrections amongst the common People in Times of Famine and Extremity; but that

[x] Vopiscus tells us likewise, that Aurelian gave doles in Victuals, Oil, &c. Quid si accumulalo, & obsonium etiam addo? Nam idem Aurelianus (Vopisci item verba) & porcina carnem populo Romano distribuit, quæ hodieque dividitur. Quando hodieque? ad tempora usque Constantini. Simile in oleo fuit, quod perpetuum populo dedit, & instituit Severus. Vinum etiam, ut nequid deesset, Aurelianus statuerat, sed morte præreptus non fecit. *Lipsius de Mag. Rom. lib. ii. c. 10.*

[y] See Livy, lib. i. c. 32 of Menenius Agrippa, and his Fable of the Belly and Limbs.

Virg. *Æneid. lib. i. ver. 152, &c.* Suet. in Vit. Claud. Cæsar. Tacit: *Annal. lib. xii. c. 43.* Aurel. Vict. in Vit. Antonini Pii.



they were timely and prudently appeased by the vigilant Care and Activity of the Magistracy, and the Emperors, who, we find, were not so much affronted and exasperated by these Seditions, as admonished and excited to see, that sufficient Provisions should be made for the future. And for such godlike Benefactions and Providences, Medals, yet extant, were often struck with this Inscription,

### ANNONA AVGVSTA.

That public Honours were given to the Magistracy likewise, who had deserved well of their Country in calamitous and necessitous Times, appears from the following Examples.

Plin. l. xxxiv.  
c. 5. & l. xviii.  
c. 3.

P. MINUTIUS, being Purveyor-General of Corn for the City in a Time of Dearth, behaved himself so well in that Office, that his Statue of Brass was erected upon a Pillar without the Gate of Rome, called *Trigemina*; and this was done with so much Affection and Devotion, that the People out of Gratitude universally contributed something towards the Charges of erecting it.

Plin. *ibid.*

TREBIUS, in his *Ædileship*, caused Wheat to be sold to the People at an *As* the *Modius*. For which Cause there were two Statues set up to his Memory, both in the *Capitol*, and also in the *Palatium*: and he himself, when he departed this Life, had this Honour done to him by the People, at his Exequies, as to be carried on their Shoulders to the Funeral Pile.

Plin. lib. xviii.  
c. 3.

It may not perhaps be thought altogether improper just to mention here the Honour that some Romans had of naming their Families from their Inventions of public Utility. Hence the *Pilumni*, who devised first the Pestal to bray Corn withal in their Mills and Bake-houses. Hence likewise the *Pisones*, who took their Name *a Pisendo*, from pounding Corn in a Mortar.

And it were much to be wished, that some Sort of *Corn Hand-Mills* were invented in *England* for the Sake of the poorer Sort, who are too often cheated by the exorbitant Tolls, and other base Tricks of the *Miller*.

And

And here we may observe, that tho' such great Care was taken amongst the *Romans* for the inferior Sort, yet as great Care likewise was taken, that no Man should receive these Bounties undeservedly, or be a Burden to the State by eating the Bread of Idleness. For the *Censors* of Rome, by their Office, had Command and Authority given them to enquire into, and reform the Life and Manners of the People, and if any one had played the ill Husband, and neglected his Farm, or left his Vine untrimmed, or was idle in his Station and Calling, the *Censors* took Notice of it.

Godwyn's R.  
Antiq. p. 160.

Agreeable to this Notion, *St. Paul* [z] (than whom no one understood the Laws of Government better) writes to the *Thessalonians*, "That if any would not *work*, neither should he *eat*. For we hear that there are some which walk among you *disorderly*, working not at all, but are busy Bodies. Now them that are such, we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with QUIETNESS they work, and eat their own Bread."

2 Theff. iii.  
10, 11, 12.

I might just take a slight Survey of other Kingdoms now flourishing upon Earth, even our [a] Enemies, and see how their Polity stands with Regard to what we have already been treating of; but as most Republics have borrowed the most excellent Parts of their Constitution from the *Egyptian*, *Grecian*, and *Roman* Commonwealths, and as this would swell this Treatise too far beyond its intended Size, I shall conclude with some Accounts of the Police of our own Nation.

[z] That *St. Paul* had the justest Notions of Government in general, appears from his beautiful Comparison between the Body natural and the Body politic, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, which immediately precedes his most excellent Chapter concerning Charity and universal Benevolence. That he understood the Laws of all the Commonwealths of the Antients, is plain from his Education under *Gamaliel*, the Jewish Doctor, his Defence in the *Areopagus of Athens*, and his ready Allusion to the *Roman Laws* upon several Occasions.

[a] The French buy up plenty of Grain when cheap, to sell to the Poor, when dear, at the ordinary Prices. *Postlethwayt on the French Trade and Navigation*.

The same Author in his *Britain's Commercial Interest*, has drawn a Plan for publick Granaries in England, &c. to prevent a Dearth of Corn, and lower the Price of Victuals, and the Labour of Trade and Manufacturies.

Per-

Perhaps no Nation in the World has so many, or however so many good Laws in favour of the Poor, as ENGLAND.

Account from  
the English  
Government

Before the Dissolution of religious Houses in this Kingdom, the *Poor* were in Part maintained by the charitable Relief of Abbies, Nunneries, Priories, and Monasteries. *In Part* maintained, I say, for that they were *wholly* fed by them, cannot be proved. It has indeed been generally thought so, and this Notion has so long prevailed, from Inattention to a Fact, which, whether false or true, few at this Distance of Time think worth their Consideration.

But as some hard Reflections were thrown upon the *Reformation*, on Account of the Increase and Neglect of the Poor, who before, as it is pretended, were so well provided for by these religious Houses, it may not be thought improper here to vindicate our Church and State from such a groundless Aspersions.

Whoever considers some of these Statutes in the Reigns of *Edward III.* *Richard II.* and *Henry V.* and *VII.* must allow, that there was as much Occasion of provisionary Laws relating to the Poor, before the Reformation, as after. If we likewise take in the antient Hospitality of the British Nobility and Gentry, and the many charitable Foundations of this Realm, erected of old by the Laity; how could ever the Monasteries claim the Merit of supporting *the whole Poor of the Nation at their Gates*, which *Dr. Biss*, falling in with the commonly received Notion, once asserted in his Sermon to the Sons of the Clergy?

p. 16.

In the Reign of *Henry VIII.* when Monasteries were in their most flourishing State and Condition, we find a very remarkable Increase of the Poor, as abundantly appears from the Preamble of an Act of the 22d of *Henry VIII.* c. 12.

Burnet's Hist.  
of the Reform.  
Part I. b. ii.  
p. 160.

And likewise from a Book, which Bishop *Burnet* says was published about this Time, intitled, *The Supplication of the Beggars*: Wherein the Beggars complained to the King, that they were reduced to great Misery.

More's Utopia  
lib. i.

The Cause of these Grievances is assigned in the Preamble of another Act of the 25th of *Henry VIII.* c. 13. where it is recited, that divers covetous Persons (among whom Sir *Thomas More* reckons the rich *Abbots*) espying the great Profit



fit of Sheep, have gotten into their Hands great Portions of the Grounds of this Realm, converting them to Pasture from Tillage, and keep some 10,000, some 20,000, some 24,000 Sheep, whereby the Prices of Cattell and Victuals are increased almost double above the Prices which have been accustomed, and the Poor driven to Nakedness, Hunger, Cold, and other Inconveniences.

Just before the Dissolution of Monasteries, *Coverdale's* Bible was published, with a Preface, from which the following Extract is taken. " I beseeke the (thou that hast the

Vid. Lewis's  
Hist. of the  
Transl. of the  
Bible, p.101.

" Risches of this World, and lovest God with thy Hart) " to lyft up thine Eyes, and see how great a Multitude of " poore People run throwe every Towne. Have pitie on " thine own Flesh, help them with a good Hart, and do " with thy Counsel al that ever thou canst, that this un- " shamefast Begging may be put downe, that these ydle " Folkes may be set to laboure, and that such as are not able " to get their living may be provided for. At the least " thou that art of Counsel, with such as are in Authoritie, " give them some Occasion to cast their Heads together, " and to make Provision for the Pore. Put them in Re- " membraunce of those noble Cities in other Countries, that, " by the Authoritie of their Princes, have so richelye and " well provided for their pore People, to the great Shame " and Dishonestye of us, yf we lykewyse receaving the " Worde of God, shew not suche lyke Frutes thereof. Wold " God, that those Men (whose Office is to mayntayne the " Common Welth) were as diligent in this Cause as they ar.

Thus having shewn, that there was an Abundance of Poor before the Reformation, and they not sufficiently provided for by Law, nor wholly maintained by the Monasteries; let us, in the next Place, see what Care was taken of them, after the Dissolution of those religious Houses; and how little Reason there is to reflect upon the Reformation for neglecting them.

The same Year King *Henry* dissolved the smaller Monasteries he made Provision for the Poor. The 27th *Hen. VIII.* c. 25, provides, that " All Governors of Shires, Cities, " Towns, Hundreds, Hamlets, and Parishes, shall find and " keep every aged Poor, and impotent Person, which was  
born

“ born or dwelt three Years within the same limit, by way  
 “ of voluntary and charitable Alms in every of the same  
 “ Cities and Parishes, &c. and such convenient Alms as  
 “ shall be thought meet by their Discretion, so as none of  
 “ them shall be compelled to go openly in begging. And  
 “ also shall compel every sturdy Vagabond to be kept in con-  
 “ tinual Labour.”

For the Sake of the Poor likewise, he ordered Hospitality and Husbandry to be kept up, by 27th *Hen. VIII.* c. 28, sect. 9.

After the Dissolution of all Monasteries, &c. in general, he again confirmed and continued the Acts, “ declaring and  
 “ concerning as well how the aged, poor, and impotent Per-  
 “ sons, compelled to live by Alms, should be ordered, and  
 “ used, and also how Vagabonds and mighty strong Beg-  
 “ gars should be whipped and punished, &c. 33d *Hen. VIII.*  
 c. 17.

And this was again confirmed, and continued in the last Year of his Reign, 37th *Hen. VIII.* c. 23.

Thus, to the Exclusion of all Reproach, was the Poor well taken Care of, and whatever Part of their Sustenance might have been lost by the Dissolution of Monasteries, it was immediately and adequately supplied by the State, whose Aid and Assistance the Poor, increasing with an increasing People, might have wanted, had Monasteries remained, as was the real Case, already shewn, in the Reigns of *Edw. III.* *Rich. II.* and *Hen. V.* and *VII.*

Archbishop *Cranmer* was greatly accused of Covetousness, and Neglect of Hospitality, and Oppression of the Poor; but how groundless the Charge brought against him was, may be made appear from several Passages of *Strype's* Memorials, but especially the following.

*Strype's Life*  
 of *Cranmer*,  
 b. iii. c. 35.

“ The more fully to confute this Calumny, it will not be  
 “ amiss to look more narrowly into his Housekeeping. His  
 “ daily Custom at Lambeth was, to dine in a Room above,  
 “ where all Noblemen, and Persons of better Quality, that  
 “ came to dine with him, were entertained. Here he was  
 “ very honourably served, both with Dishes and Attendants.  
 “ In the Hall the Table was every Day very plentifully fur-  
 “ nished, both for Household Servants and Strangers, with  
 “ three

“ three or four principal Head-Messes of Officers: Besides  
 “ the Relief of the Poor at his Gates. And, which is a  
 “ very observable Charity, as well as Hospitality, he ap-  
 “ propriated his Mansion-house at *Bekesborn* in *Kent*; and  
 “ his Parsonage-Barn, for Harbour and Lodgings for the  
 “ poor, sick, and maimed Soldiers, that came from the  
 “ Wars of *Bulloign*, and other Parts beyond Seas. For  
 “ these he also appointed an Almoner, a Physician, and a  
 “ Chirurgeon, to attend on them, and to dress, and admi-  
 “ nister Physic to such of them as were not able to resort  
 “ to their own Countries; having also daily from his Kitchen  
 “ hot Broth and Meat, besides the common Alms of his  
 “ Household, that were bestowed upon the poor People of  
 “ the Country. And when any of these were recovered, and  
 “ were able to travel, they had Money given them to bear  
 “ their Charges, according to the Number of Miles they  
 “ were to pass before they got home.”

After the Reign of King *Henry*, to the Time of Queen  
*Elizabeth*, all proper Care was taken of the Poor, tho’ it is  
 supposed that during that Interval they were much neglected.  
*Barlow* [b] says, “ that the Loiterer and the Indigent, who  
 “ were Retainers to the religious Houses, must (by the Dis-  
 “ solution of them) have been put to their Shifts, [c] as  
 “ well as their old Masters; and he thinks the Legislature  
 “ did not immediately judge them worthy their Care, or  
 “ find any inconsiderable Inconvenience from them: For  
 “ the first general Statute in this Kingdom, says he, for the  
 “ Support of the Poor, comes more than 50 Years after the  
 “ Subversion of religious Houses, when the monastic Gene-  
 “ ration, with its Dependants, was passed away; and adds,  
 “ It doth appear by Statute 1 and 2 *P. and M.* c. 4; and 5  
 “ *Eliz.* c. 20; that the vagabond Tribe, called Egyptians,  
 “ were in those Times increased, which probably might be  
 “ owing, in some Degree, to the Dissolution of Monasteries.”

[b] See *Barlow's Justice*, under the Word *Poor*.

[c] That the *Poor* were not altogether maintained at the Gates of the  
 Monasteries is evident, if we consider that in many Parts of *England* there  
 were no Monasteries for twenty Miles together; how could the *Poor* then  
 be supported by Monasteries where there were none?



But I humbly conceive, that Mr. *Barlow* is much mistaken in what he here advances, and has not so accurately considered the old Statutes in favour of the Poor as he might have done. The Tribe called Egyptians were much more numerous and troublesome to the Nation before the Dissolution of Monasteries than afterwards, as appears from the 7 *R. II.* c. 5, and 19 *H. VII.* c. 12. but more especially from the 22 *H. VIII.* c. 10, which was made, as the Preamble says, "Forasmuch as before this Time divers and many outlandish People, calling themselves Egyptians, using no Craft nor Feat of Merchandize, have come into this Realm, and gone from Shire to Shire, and Place to Place, in great Company---to the great Hurt and Deceit of the People that they have come among."

What Laws were made for the Relief of the Poor in King *Henry's* Reign, have been already pointed out, which, with the following, sufficiently disprove Mr. *Barlow's* Assertions.

The 1st of *Edward VI.* c. 14. § 12, appoints Commissioners of Charity Lands to employ them, for the Poor.

The 3 and 4 of *Ed. VI.* c. 16, revives the Statute of 22 *H. VIII.* c. 12, and appoints how impotent and aged Persons shall be relieved, and Vagabonds punished; that common Labourers in Husbandry, who do loiter and be idle when they have reasonable Wages offered them, shall be punished as Vagabonds. Maimed, sore, aged, and impotent Persons, shall be relieved and cured, and Habitations provided for them, by the Devotion of good People of that City, Town, or Village, where they were born, or have dwelt three Years.

The 2 and 3 of *P. and M.* c. 5, orders that the Statute of 22 *H. VIII.* c. 12; and the 3 and 4 *Ed. VI.* c. 16, concerning Beggars, Vagabonds, and idle Persons, shall be put in Execution, and further provides a Remedy where a Parish is not able to relieve the Poor therein, and where a Town surcharged with Poor, standeth in or near two Counties.

And these Laws were thought so equitable and salutary to the Commonwealth, and the Poor therein, that they were revived by 5 *Eliz.* c. 3, with this additional Force, that, if any Parishioner shall obstinately refuse to pay reasonably towards the Relief of the Poor, or shall discourage others, then the Justices of the Peace at the Quarter Sessions may tax him  
to

to a reasonable weekly Sum, which if he refuses to pay, they may commit him to Prison.

In Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign it was, that *Overseers* in Parishes were first instituted, who were to be substantial Persons, having Competency of Wealth, Wisdom, and a good Conscience. And indeed this Name and Office of *Overseers* may be seem the best, and not the meanest Men, it being a Name and Office of great Antiquity and Excellence, as you may see in the Acts of the Apostles, vi. 35. And tho' the Persons are not dignified according to the Singularity of the Subject, yet this is not the least Office to be called Overseers of the Poor; for as God himself hath a special Respect to the Miseries of the Poor, so they be like God, who provide for the Necessities of the Poor.

The Laws which the *English* Government enacted, for each respective Parish to take Care of their own Poor, are founded on this equitable Reason, that those Towns who enjoyed the Benefit of their Labour, in their Youth and Health, ought to support them in the Time of Sickness, Want, or old Age.

If, beside the Provision of the Law, we consider the many *Hospitals* we have for the sick and lame Poor, we may with great Justice be said to excel all Countries upon Earth in Acts of Charity and Humanity. I don't remember to have read of any of these charitable Foundations amongst the Ancients. Indeed *Herodotus*, *Strabo*, and others tell us, that, at first, the Causes of Distempers, and the Manner of Cure, were graven upon Pillars and Tables, and upon the Walls of the Temples, for the Good of the Public: And that many of the earliest Nations of the World took the Sick into the most public Places of their Cities, in hopes that some one that passed by, who had laboured under the same Disorder, might give his Advice, and apply the same Remedies by which he himself had been cured. But with us convenient Houses are erected, Physicians appointed, proper Medicines and Food administered, and all such other Assurances given *gratis*, that the Noblemen and Gentlemen, who support these Institutions, often want themselves in like Cases.

I should not forget to mention here, amongst other Works of Charity, the *Houses of Correction*, and the penal Laws

(made after the Manner of the oldest and best States) to correct the Abandoned and Dissolute, to make the Idle work, and endeavour to maintain themselves and Families, and thereby render themselves worthy of the Provision and Protection they obtain from the Commonwealth under which they live.

With Regard to the *Weights and Measures* of our Land, to the Glory of the English Establishment, it is ordained by MAGNA CHARTA, that one [d] Standard of Weights and Measures be throughout the Kingdom. And whenever any Frauds and Abuses have been discovered herein, a due and speedy Regulation has been made thereof by our British Legislature; who, upon many pressing Emergencies, have acquired to their Country as much Good, and to themselves as much Honour by their Proceedings, as ever did the Jewish *Sanhedrim*, the Athenian *Areopagus*, or the Roman *Senate*.

The greatest Care has always been taken likewise, to set (as the Circumstances and Alterations of Times required) a *proper Assize of Bread*, and full Power and Authority, from Time to Time, has been given to the Magistrates, to prevent the *Bakers* from injuring the Subject in the Quality or Quantity thereof.

We have had excellent Laws also against *Regraters*, *Forestallers*, and *Ingrossers*, to hinder any artificial Dearth arising on the Publick; and if thro' their Breach of Justice, and iniquitous Practices; or by the Permission of Heaven, we still find Dearth and Famines in the *English* History; we may however discover, in those Seasons of Distress, as provident Care taken, and as public a Spirit exerted by the King, and his Magistrates, not inferior to that of the Emperors and *Ædiles* of *Rome*, in the like Circumstances.

[e] In the 8th Year of King *Edward* II. 1314, the Price of Victuals being so excessive, that the common People were

[d] Eighth of *Eadgar* appoints one Mynet or Weight, and one Measure (that of Winchester) for all England.

[e] The three following Instances are taken from a very useful and valuable Book, entitled *Artachibos*, where the Reader may meet with many more, and other important Articles and Orders, relating to the Assize of Bread, Weights, Measures, &c. This Book was published by Order of the most Hon. Privy-Council, in the Year 1638, and reprinted in the Year 1748.

not



not able to live; by Parliament at London, 3d Feb. it was ordained, and the King's Writs were published, to lower the Prices thereof, for the Relief of the poorer Sort.

In the 15 R. II. A. D. 1391, a Dearth of Corn continued almost for two Years, whereby it came to pass, that when the Time of Fruits, as Nuts, Apples, Plums, Pears, &c. was come, many poor People through over-feeding thereof died of the Flux. And if the commendable Care of *Adam Baume*, then Mayor of London, had not relieved the Commons, who continually provided, that from the Parts beyond the Seas, Corn was brought to London to the Relief of the whole Realm, where otherwise, without Doubt, neither had the Country sufficed the City, nor the City succoured the Country.

To the Furtherance of which good Work, in relieving the Poor, the Mayor and Citizens of London, took out of the Orphan's Chest in their Guildhall, 2000 Marks, to buy Corn and other Victuals from beyond the Seas, and the Aldermen each of them laid out 20*l.* to the like Purpose of buying Corn, which was bestowed in divers Places, where the Poor might buy at an appointed Price, and such as lacked Money to pay down, did put in Surety to pay in the Year following, in which Year, when Harvest came, the Fields yielded plentiful Increase, and so the Price of Corn began to decrease.

In the 29th Year of Queen *Eliz.* A. D. 1586, about January, her Majesty observing the general Dearth of Corn, and other Victuals, grown partly thro' the Unseasonableness of the Year then past, and partly through the uncharitable Greediness of Corn-Masters, but especially thro' the unlawful and over-much transporting of Grain into foreign Parts; by the Advice of her most Hon. Privy-Council, published a *Proclamation*, and a *Book of Orders* to be taken by the Justices, for Relief of the Poor.

In the 6th Year of the Reign of *Charles I.* 1630, was made the following Proclamation for preventing the then Dearth of Corn and Victuals.

" The King's most excellent Majestie (whose watchful Eye  
 " of Providence, for the publique Good of his loving Sub-  
 " jects, is alwayes kept open) hath lately taken into his  
 " princely Consideration, the general Scarcity and Dearth of  
 " Grain and Victual like to fall out, and much feared this  
 " Yeere following in many Parts of this Kingdom: And  
 " having

“ having, upon Advice with the Lords of his Majesties Privy-  
 “ Counsell, considered of such good Meanes, as have been here-  
 “ tofore used upon the like Occasion, and some others, which  
 “ by a due and seasonable Execution, may (by God’s Blef-  
 “ sing) prevent those Extremities, which otherwise the Scar-  
 “ city threatened may bring forth, doeth, by this his Pro-  
 “ clamation, publish and declare his Royall Pleasure and  
 “ Commandment therein, for the Good of his People, in  
 “ the severall Articles here ensuing.”

“ First, whereas his Majestie hath with the Advice of his  
 “ said Privy-Counsell, caused a Booke of Orders, for pre-  
 “ venting and remedying the Dearth of Grain and Victual  
 “ (which was first conceived and made in the Time of the  
 “ late Queen Elizabeth, and afterwards renewed in the Time  
 “ of his Majesties Royal Father of blessed Memory) to be  
 “ again revised, and enlarged with some necessary Additions,  
 “ grounded upon the Statutes made since the first publish-  
 “ ing thereof, and hath taken care for reprinting of the same,  
 “ whereby particular Directions are given for suppressing the  
 “ Abuses and Offences of Ingrossers, Badgers, Broggers,  
 “ Carriers, and Buyers of Corne, Mault-makers, Brewers,  
 “ Bakers, Milners, and others trading in Corne, as also  
 “ for causing the Assize of Bread and Beere to be truly  
 “ kept, and the Markets duely supplied with Corne; and  
 “ the Poore first served and provided for, with other like  
 “ Clauses to the good Purpose aforesayd: His Majestie strait-  
 “ ly chargeth and commandeth, as well the Lord Maior,  
 “ Recorder, Aldermen, and Sheriffes of the City of Lon-  
 “ don, and all other Officers and Ministers of the said  
 “ Citie, as also all and singular Sheriffes, Justices of Peace,  
 “ and other Officers and Ministers in the severall Counties of  
 “ this Realme, and all Maiors, Sheriffes, Bayliffes, Alder-  
 “ men, and other Magistrates, Officers, and Ministers of  
 “ all other Cities and Towns Corporate, that they and  
 “ every of them, within their severall Limits and Jurisdic-  
 “ tions respectively, doe carefully and diligently put in due  
 “ and speedie Execution the said Orders and Directions, and  
 “ every of them, according to his Majesties expresse Plea-  
 “ sure therein signified, as well avoyd his Majesties just In-  
 “ dignation, and such farther Punishments as shall or may  
 “ be inflicted upon them, for their Neglect of any of the  
 “ Duties of their severall Places, and the Contempt of this  
 “ his Majesties Royal Commandment, &c. “ And

“ And his Majestie doth commend unto his Subjects in  
 “ their private Families, in this Time of Scarcity, Absti-  
 “ nence, and sober and moderate Dyet, and out of what is  
 “ sav’d thereby, charitably and bountifully employ some  
 “ good Proportion towards the Relief of those, that shall  
 “ be in Penury and Want, and would bee glad to bee re-  
 “ freshed with the meanest of that Foode which is super-  
 “ fluously spent in rich Mens Houses.

“ And in like Manner his Majestie doth hereby give a  
 “ special Charge, as well to the Lord Maior of the Citie of  
 “ London, and all Maiors and Magistrates of the Out Portes,  
 “ as also to all Sheriffes, and Justices of Peace of the mari-  
 “ time Counties, and all and singular his Majesties Officers  
 “ of his Customes for their severall Limites, Places of At-  
 “ tendance, and Jurisdictions respectively, that the Articles  
 “ specified in the said imprinted Booke of Orders for re-  
 “ straying the Exportation of Corne and Victuall be duely  
 “ and carefully observed, and put in Execution.

“ Lastly, His Majestie doth hereby signifie and declare  
 “ to all and singular Maiors, Sheriffes, Justices of Peace,  
 “ Bayliffes, Aldermen, and other his Officers, Ministers,  
 “ and Subjects, whome it may concerne, That as his Ma-  
 “ jestie hath published this his Royal Proclamation, and the  
 “ sayd imprinted Orders, for the Safety, Weale, and Plenty  
 “ of his People, and for the preserving of the Lives and  
 “ Health of the Poore, against Famine and the Diseases  
 “ which follow the Want of wholesome Foode; and doubt-  
 “ eth not but good Effects will ensue thereof, if every Man  
 “ in his Place will readily and willingly put to a helping  
 “ Hand, for the Execution of the good Orders con-  
 “ tained in the sayd Booke, and in this his Proclamation:  
 “ So, if by Neglect, or Contempt hereof, these evil Effects  
 “ which may then be feared, doe ensue, his Majestie and his  
 “ Throne are innocent; and the Offenders, as they may  
 “ well expect the just Judgement of Allmighty God, so let  
 “ them be assured, that his Majestie will require a strict and  
 “ severe Accompt of them, and inflict such Punishment on  
 “ them, as those Persons deserve, who doe incurre his high  
 “ Displeasure and Indignation, and as may justly be inflict-  
 “ ed upon the Contemners of his Royal Commandment, in  
 “ a Case of such Necessity and Importance.

But to descend still nearer to our own Times. *Queen  
Anne*



*Anne*, amidst the Height of her Wars and Success abroad, did not forget the growing Distresses of her People at home. In her Speech of Nov. 5, 1709, to the Lords and Commons, she says, " I think it proper to take Notice to you, that the  
 " great Dearth and Scarcity, under which our Neighbours a-  
 " broad have suffered, this Year begins to affect us in some  
 " Measure at home, by the Temptations of Profit, in car-  
 " rying out too much of our Corn, while it bears so high a  
 " Price in foreign Parts. This occasions many Complaints  
 " from the Poor; for whose Sake, I earnestly recommend  
 " to you, to take this growing Evil into your Consideration,  
 " having not neglected any thing on my Part towards the  
 " remedying of it; that the Law would allow."

Upon which was made the famous Act, with the Table of the Assize of Bread, afterwards explained and amended *pro re nata*, in the Reigns of King *George I.* and *II.*

Many more Instances, and Laws, of the same Kind, might here be quoted, which with the afore-mentioned, will always shine with peculiar Lustre in the British Annals, as long as Religion, sound Policy, and Humanity, shall be esteemed valuable amongst Mankind.

I shall now finish this Account, by taking Notice of that Part of his present Majesty's most gracious Speech, relative to the present Circumstances of the suffering Poor, together with the Answer thereto in the Address from the Commons, and the Proceedings and Resolutions already entered into consequent thereupon. Which, I hope, in some Measure, may tend to pacify and assuage the Riots and Tumults which have arisen, and now frequently arise, amongst the Subject, especially the Poor, who are too impatient, perhaps, from the want of a due Consideration, or from Ignorance of what proper Means have been and will be consulted upon, and taken by the Legislature, for the Redress of their Grievances.

In the Royal *Speech* of Dec. 2 last, his Majesty, like a true Father of his Country, says, " That he cannot be un-  
 " mindful of the poorer Sort, from the present high Price  
 " of Corn, and the Disturbances which have arisen therefrom.  
 " And I recommend to you, my Lords and Gentlemen, to  
 " consider of proper Provisions for preventing the like Mis-  
 " chiefs hereafter."

In the *Address* of the House in Answer hereto, are the Words following. " We beg Leave to assure your Majesty, that  
 " your

“ faithful Commons will consider of proper Provisions for the  
 “ Relief of the poorer Sort, from the present high Price of Corn,  
 “ and for preventing the like Mischiefs hereafter, according to  
 “ the royal and compassionate Recommendation of your Majesty.”

Accordingly, in order immediately to prevent these growing Evils, a Resolution was entered into by the House on *Dec. 3*, that an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, that he will be graciously pleased to order an Embargo to be forthwith laid upon all Ships laden, or to be laden, in the Ports of Great-Britain and Ireland, with Corn, Malt, Meal, Flour, Bread, Biscuit, and Starch, to be exported to foreign Parts.

And on the 28th of Jan. following, the Lord-Mayor of London reported from the Committee, who were appointed to consider of proper Provisions for preventing the high Price of Corn and Bread for the future, and to report the same to the House, with all convenient Speed; that the Committee had made some farther Progress in the Matter to them referred, and had come to several Resolutions, which they had directed him to report to the House; which he read in his Place, and afterwards delivered in at the Table, where the same were read, and are as followeth.

*Resolved*, That it is the Opinion of this Committee, that, in order to prevent Abuses and Frauds in buying and selling Corn and Grain, and to reduce it to one Standard, all Persons be obliged to buy and sell all Sorts of Grain, Corn, Meal, and Flour, by *Weight* only.

*Resolved*, That it is the Opinion of this Committee, that the Bounty given for the Exportation of Corn or Grain, should be ascertained by the Weight of such Corn or Grain.

*Resolved*, That it is the Opinion of this Committee, that the Assize of Bread be fixed agreeable to the Price and Weight of the Corn and Grain, of which such Bread shall be made.

On the 2d of *Feb.* the Lord-Mayor reported from the Committee, who were appointed to consider of proper Provisions for preventing the high Price of Corn and Bread for the future, and to report the same to the House with all convenient Speed, that the Committee had made some farther Progress in the Matter to them referred, and had come to a Resolution which they had ordered him to report to the House; which he read in his Place, and afterwards delivered in at the Table; where the same was read, and agreed to by the House, and is as followeth.

*Resolved*, That the Provisions made in relation to engrossing Corn, by an Act of Parliament made in the 5th and 6th Years of the Reign of *Ed. VI.* intituled, *An Act against Regraters, Forestallers, and Engrossers*, and by another Act of Parliament passed in



the 5th Year of the Reign of Q. Elizabeth, intituled, *An Act touching Badgers of Corn, and Drovers of Cattle to be licensed*, and by another Act of Parliament passed in the 15th Year of the Reign of King Charles II. intituled, *An Act for the Encouragement of Trade*, have been found inconvenient, and have rendered the supplying one Part of his Majesty's Kingdom of Great-Britain with Corn, from another Part thereof, very difficult.

*Ordered*, That a Bill be brought in, to explain and amend the Laws gainst Regraters, Foretallers, and Engrossers of Corn; and that the Lord Mayor of London, Mr. Recorder of London, Mr. Rose Fuller, the Lord Register of Scotland, and Mr. William Noel, do prepare and bring in the same.

*March 11, Ordered*, That it be an Instruction to the Committee, who were appointed to consider of proper Provisions for preventing the high Price of Corn and Bread for the future, and to report the same to the House with all convenient Speed, that they do enquire into the Abuses of Millers, Mealmen, and Bakers, with regard to Bread, and consider of proper Methods for preventing the said Abuses, and for better settling the Assize of Bread.

Some Consultations first had for lowering the Price of Corn, and preventing the Disturbances arising therefrom, have already passed into Laws, (namely)

*Passed May 6.* An Act for continuing an Act of this present Session of Parliament, intituled, *An Act to prohibit for a certain Time, the making of low Wines and Spirits, from Wheat, Barley, Malt, or any other Sort of Grain, or from any Meal or Flour.* And an Act for continuing an Act of this present Session of Parliament, intituled, *An Act to discontinue for a limited Time, the Duties upon Corn and Flour imported, and also upon such Corn, Grain, Meal, Bread, Biscuit and Flour, as have been, or shall be taken from the Enemy, and brought into this Kingdom.*

The Subjects, 'tis true, and the *poor ones* especially, have been of late much oppressed, and suffered greatly the last hard Winter, and by their frequent Insurrections now in different Parts of the Kingdom, are apprehensive that Times will be still harder with them. But Evils cannot be remedied all at once. From what has been done, and what is intended to be done for their Succour, from the King and Parliament's most sacred Promise to relieve them, and from the Proposals that we may expect will be made by Men of Power and Abilities, who have studied for their Country's Good during their late Retirement, all Things, no Doubt, (by the Blessing of God) will be settled and provided for, this Session, to the distressing and subduing of the Enemy abroad, and for the Relief and Satisfaction of the Subject at home.



